

From: TA
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/21/02 1:02am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Good Morning

I would like to offer a comment on an aspect of the Microsoft Monopoly that I have not seen discussed in detail.

I am the senior for a large corporate development department.

What is happening now is that software such as word processors, spreadsheets, operating systems have matured and are not gaining a lot of new features in the newer releases. A lot of companies and people don't upgrade their software on as regular a basis as the basic functionality is not changing a lot and the stability of today's software is much better than even 5 years ago. i.e. windows 95 crashed every 4-5 hours whereas windows 2000 can run for months or even years without ever crashing. What this means for Microsoft is that their revenue streams are going to start softening up as this newer and much better software provides much longer life spans.

Enter a new feature in Microsoft's new software called WPA under the pretext of controlling piracy. This system takes a "picture" of the hardware of the computer that it is installed and then allows only a few minor changes to that computer. The problem here is that when you buy a piece of Microsoft software it is now locked to one computer. What this means when you buy a new computer as your hardware becomes obsolete or even if you upgrade your current computer your Microsoft software is now locked out and you have to buy another full copy in order to regain the functionality you have already paid for in your previous computer and want to move over (not copy) to your new computer. So as people's computers become obsolete or even break and need new parts Microsoft forces them to buy new software regardless of whether they need or want it. This means that if you need a particular piece of software (and in Microsoft's monopoly position it may be a piece of software that they have taken over the market on i.e. operating systems) on your older computer in which case you have to decide on buying a new computer or paying for an expensive operating system that may only have 6 month's or a year of use because they have locked it into a particular computer.

For example I have office 2000 on my current computer While I intend to upgrade my computer in the next couple of years I have no intentions of upgrading my office 2000 as it currently does everything I need it to. Under office xp I would HAVE to purchase the office upgrade at several hundred dollars just to continue using the software I legally purchased to use all my content that is only compatible with MS office.

In an open competitive system I wouldn't have a problem with this. I would

simply buy someone else's software But in Microsoft's monopoly position and the fact they either are the only manufacturers of some software or make the only software that will run other software WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE. We HAVE to buy their software and with this new WPA, upgrade at whatever intervals Microsoft feels is appropriate to keep their revenue stream up.

I feel that as part of this settlement Microsoft should be forced to abandon this monopolistic and restrictive software practice and allow people to be able to remove legally purchased software from obsolete computers and install it on a new machine with paying hundreds of dollars to Microsoft for no other reason then they want to keep their revenue streams up at the consumer's expense.

Thanks for reading my submission

Rob A